

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.

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"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

COMMENTARY ON PHILIPPIANS (Installment 11)

By Richard W. Ebler

Chapter One (cont.)

(vs. 15-18) "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

Paul has just mentioned in verse fourteen how God had used his imprisonment to cause many of the brethren to speak the word boldly (as they ought to speak, Eph. 6:19, 20). It is God's usual way to make evil work for good to them that love him (Rom. 8:28), as it was said by one in a certain place, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good" (Gen. 50:20). Nothing tunes us up like persecution. This is one of the many evils that is "sufficient unto the day" to drive us to the Lord (Matt. 6:34).

Some of these were preaching Christ from an impure motive. They seemed to be envious of Paul's influence and success among the saints in various quarters. Today this would be called "preacher-jealousy" and exists among Babylonish churches. They also preached from a spirit of strife, which is listed as a work of the flesh in Galatians 5:20. Here then is a lesson in motives that will bear upon the doctrine of works. Wrong motives spoil right actions, and the human heart is a cesspool of evil lusts and selfish desires (Matt. 15:19). God, speaking by the mouth of Jeremiah, declares that it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). Add to this the fact that the only good and acceptable work that a mortal man can do before God is that work which proceeds from a regenerated heart acting from a principle of faith in God's Word and unfeigned love for Him (1 Thess. 1:3) through Christ. Hence all mere human goodness appears to be truly filthy and abominable (Job 15:15, 16; Isa. 64:6), so that the very plowing of the wicked is sin (Prov. 21:4).

These men, then, were taking the holy things of God and using them for selfish ends. This is a very horrible Judas-like sin. It would be far better not to profess the faith at all than to do so from a carnal motive and be found a hypocrite in the last day when Christ shall say to those who thought they had prophesied in His name, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire . . ." (Matt. 25:41). It is a frightening thing, but nevertheless it is the truth, that hypocrites do not usually know that they are hypocrites, for "every man's way is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 21:2). Furthermore, it is to be remembered that these hypocrites were religious teachers, as was the son of perdition (John 17:12). It is amazing how

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The Word of Truth

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much the apostles emphasized in their epistles that saints ought to beware of false teachers (II Tim. 3:6-9; Titus 1:10, 11; II Peter 2:1-19; I John 2:18; Jude 4). Why do we not hear this emphasis today? Because false teachers themselves have multiplied and lulled the multitudes into a sleep of lukewarmness and carnal indifference. Against such the God of heaven pronounces His most terrible judgments (Matt. 23:13-39)!

One can not always detect a false prophet by what he says. Like Satan, he may quote God's word for his own purposes (Matt. 4:6). Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached by these men because he knew that God could overrule their wrong motives and use what truth was being preached to the salvation of souls. After all, Balaam was instructed out of the mouth of an ass (Num. 22:28-32). Nevertheless we are never to presume upon the Providence of God by allowing ourselves to remain under the regular teaching of ungodly men. The Word of the Lord is "Cease my son to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge" (Prov. 19:27). Of those who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof it is commanded "From such turn away" (II Tim. 3:5) for "their word will eat as doth a canker" (II Tim. 2:17) and can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned? The very spiritual environment that surrounds such men is contaminating; as it is written, "evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33). Again, these are men who will usually mix a good portion of truth with their error, but it is "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). If they have not the heart-fruits of unfeigned faith and love, of hungering and thirsting after the things of God, of zeal for the Word of God, of holy living, of willingness to suffer for Christ's sake, of a sense of God's truth and a lively response toward Him in daily fellowship, of a shepherd's heart, of power to instruct in the way of salvation with an ability to edify, then they are examples of dead orthodoxy and probably only hold the truth by tradition and not by the revelation of God to their own souls. They are "trafficking in unfelt truths." All that receive not the love of the truth will be damned (II Thess. 2:10-12).

But, praise God, Paul knew of others that were
(Please turn to page 7)

DIVISIONS

What sore companions be these wretches I now
see —

Appearance sweet with frothy grins,
And words fraught with the honeycomb;
While yet with guile their mouths are filled,
And poisoned asp's beneath their lips.

Their words with a cunning wit do themselves
extol

While wrapped in fine humility.
They worship "will" above the Lord,
Though often they expound the theme
Of worship and humility,
Which appeareth voluntary.

Presumption marks their swelling words of
emptiness;

They see no saint submitted true,
Unless they see what they propound.
And thus they on the premise build,
That all estranged from God remain.

Their major theme is what they have experi-
enced —

Or what they do set forth as such.
They speak so as to emulate
The ones whose teaching they embrace.
From Christ, the loved of God, their eyes
Are turned to things that have no soul.

Thus the wicked wedge of cursed division begins
To push its way, almost unseen.

Soon personalities are held
Instead of truth, which once didst free —
Though truth is lauded very much.

Soon whisperings and discontent do raise their
heads;

Those once stable grow so simple
Questions are flung out and thought upon
Which hold no building for the saint,
But only bring confusion's work.

Deception also showing its ugly head in some —
Attempts defection to paint up;

So palpable it will appear!
Interest then is manufactured —
Vexing is this to the faithful.

Yet still the festering sore eats with evil work
From house to house in quiet spreads,
'Til many minds are taken in.

The Word cannot be uttered full,
For fear of argument involved.

Restraint is placed upon the saints sweet fellow-
ship;

Some matters held in perversion
Need a lengthy explanation
Lest defilement ever spreading
Drag the simple into its swiftness.

The above thoughts are brought forth from my own experience, and are not theory. I would sound the note of alarm to any who might be experiencing similar manifestations in their own assemblies. Division is from the Devil, and is as subtle as He is Himself. Let all who watch over the flock of God be aware of all such moves, and constantly bear the sheep up before the Lord for sustaining grace, while instructing wisely and discreetly in those things that pertain unto life and godliness. Let God's people strive everywhere to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace for the glorification of the Lord and the edification of His people.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SOUL AND THE SPIRIT

Man is a triune being, "body, soul, and spirit" (I Thess. 5:23). As distinct as these separate members are from one another, yet they are indistinguishable to the natural mind which cannot see things as they are. Invisible to the unregenerate is the true nature of things; the real issues of life, the actual values, the basic components - these are all hidden from his mundane and limited view. **While man purports to seek to understand himself in psychology, social studies, and intellectual analyses, yet without a personal and intimate intercourse with Jehovah God through the Lord Jesus Christ he remains basically and fundamentally ignorant of himself and his true nature.** In the sphere of the soul and spirit these principles are abundantly brought to play. Man, apart from Divine tutelage is unable to distinguish between his soul and his spirit, although the distinction is quite real, and the two natures are as divers as two things can possibly be.

The soul is the animal or physical life of man; that part of man which forms his natural personality; it is that rational part of man that evaluates, weighs circumstances, and forms conclusions. Man, in natural essence, is a "living soul" (Gen. 2:7), a distinct immaterial personality, capable of decision, rationality, and intellectuality. He reasons, ponders, is persuaded, and bears an individual distinctiveness that is nowhere duplicated in the natural creation. And yet, the soul is not the essential part of man; it is not the part to which the burden of our attention is to be paid. The spirit of man - that is the fundamental part!

As the Scriptures declare, the "spirit of man is the candle of the Lord" (Prov. 20:27); it is that part of man wherein the light of God doth shine; that which is illuminated by the "light of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6). It is in this part of our nature that true worship takes place (John 4:24), while we have "no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3), "worshipping God in the spirit and rejoicing in Christ Jesus." This is the profitable part of man, as it is written; "It is the spirit (man's spirit) that quickeneth, the flesh (natural part of man) profiteth nothing" (Jno. 6:63). This is where we "rejoice in God our Savior" (Luke 1:47) as did Mary, and where we serve the Lord (Rom. 7:6). The spirit of man is not the rational part of man; it does not evaluate things to see what is reality; it rejoices in the truth, responding **always** to good and evil spontaneously.

The spirit of man is ultra sensitive; it is cast down by evil and uplifted by truth. It does not have to be taught; it is always receptive. The basic problem lies in the saint providing an environment for the spirit that will make for spirituality. **Observe that it is quite possible for the spirit of man to engage in spiritual activity without the understanding being fruitful or entering into the matter** (I Cor. 14:14). This is not to say that understanding is to be disdained; God forbid! We are to be men in understanding (I Cor. 14:20). This is only to illustrate that **the spirit is transcendent to our understanding; it is not limited by**

understanding, for it is basically responsive, not rational. When the Lord has placed within us a new spirit (Ezek. 11:19; 36:36; 18:31) that "spirit" has the properties of Divinity in that it loves righteousness and hates iniquity (Heb. 1:9). Actually our life in Christ is educational in that we are brought gradually into a fuller awareness of our spirit and a lesser awareness of our soul. We learn to be spiritually sensitive to our spirit's longings and desires; its hunger for the truth, longing to be with the Lord, and worship and adoration of the Lord of lords and King of kings.

Those who live "in the flesh" (Rom. 7:7-8) will invariably mistake the soul for the spirit, thus becoming involved in a basically fleshly religion while all the time supposing it to be spiritual. I trust that I have established sufficiently to your heart that the difference between soul and spirit is the difference between earth and heaven, eternity and temporality, unseen and seen, faith and carnal reasonings. One of the lamentable things about vast segments of professing Christendom is that it charges the souls of men while at the same time starving the spirits of them. Music, programs, sermons, appeals - all are calculated to charge the soul with the sort of enthusiasm that is necessary to cause the institution to flourish. But, all the while its adherents remain spiritually aloof from God, even though they draw near to Him with their lips (Matt. 15:8). There is such a thing as "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:4); i.e., a zeal that would quickly, if not instantaneously, dissipate were the truth to be actually realized in the heart. **Zeal is to be the result of the apprehension of reality, the perception of truth, the understanding and acknowledgment of the "mystery of God and of Christ"** (Col. 2:2). The alarming thing about this whole despicable situation is that those involved in the spiritless institutionalism that is so prevalent today will actually admit their basic and fundamental ignorance of spiritual things - their higher nature has never been saturated with truth, and yet they appear to be quite zealous, and are recognized as religious - yea, devoutly religious - people. But here is the irony of the matter, **valid zeal is utterly impossible without real spiritual knowledge and understanding.** Truth so charges the spirit as to make it unbelievably energetic, while the soul is charged by appeals and references to things basically natural. It is lamentably true that in all of us our soul too often dominates us while the spirit within us is kept in the background. We rationalize, reason, figure out the workings in our life by a logical analysis - all to the subversion of our spirits and the snuffing out of their life-giving life!

To avert this trend in our lives it becomes necessary to know how to distinguish between the soul and the spirit, thereby making for a God-centered sojourn. In this distinction we obviously cannot be cast upon our own resources. The difficulty at this point is distinguishing between the purely mundane and the heavenly aspects of our nature. It becomes plain, therefore, that mere natural resources and powers cannot be employed in this decipherization, for they will naturally gravitate to and select the lower nature as the preeminent nature. God in His inscrutable wisdom provided us with very effectual means in this task

of distinguishing between the soul and the spirit - earth-life and heaven-life. It is the Word of God; "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the **dividing asunder of soul and spirit . . .**" (Heb. 4:12). The Word of God will cleave a wide gulf between these two factors, showing that which is of the Lord and that which is of the earth. Some sophists, at once seeing the strong implications of this statement, will state that the Word is here speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not of the written Word; but thereby do they evidence their absolute novicehood in things Divine. The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of the written Word; or to put it more accurately, the written Word is the expression of the Spirit of Christ. There is no variance between Jesus and the Scriptures. Yea, the "testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). What the written Word does is communicate unto us in our own language the truths of the unseen world. These truths are embodied in the Lord Jesus Christ - personified in Him. **So closely knit is our blessed Lord with the Scriptures that He cannot be realized in truth apart from them.** They have been written "that we might believe, and that believing we might have life through His Name" (John 20:31). The Scriptures are the expression of God's mind, of His Person, of His character! In the highest sense our Lord Jesus is the same, and therefore is He called "The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13) and "The Word" (John 1:1). He is the "express Image of the Father" (Heb. 1:3), being the epitomy of His fulness (Col. 1:19; 2:9). **The Lord God is no more fully expressed than in the Person of His Son, and His Son is no more fully expressed than in the Scriptures! Thus He that properly sees the Son sees the Father (John 14:9), and he that properly sees the Scriptures sees the Lord Jesus (Luke 24:32, 45).** To properly preach Christ, therefore, one must proclaim the Scriptures; and the Scriptures properly expounded will be synonymous with preaching Christ. Now, I have taken this time in order to establish to your heart the high position of the Scriptures in the economy of God. None of the people of God ought to balk at the statement that the Scriptures are the Word of God expressed clearly and concisely in the language of the Spirit. The Word is God's proclamation; let none disdain it, minimize it, or hold it in disrepute. God hath magnified His word above all of His Name (Psa. 138:2); His proclamations as conveyed through holy men filled with the Holy Ghost are to be set forth as a pre-eminent spiritual commodity. His Word sets forth His purpose, His mercy, His love, His salvation and great redemptive plan. Further, only as we come into a fuller awareness of His decrees may we be brought into an appreciation of "the Lord's Christ." **Men speak in vain of Christ Jesus apart from the Scriptures; they are the verbal expression of Him, and He is the personal embodiment of them!**

Now, the Word of God conveys to us the material with which spiritual conceptions may be formed. The Word of God speaks to man's spirit, not to his reason! It brings to play upon the spirit the truth which it delights in, thereby strengthening it and bringing it into the dominancy in our beings. While enthroned above body and soul, the spirit will dictate the course of reason which the

soul is to take, and the course of action which the body is to take. The spirit does not rationalize the truth, it imbibes it, and the truth enlivens and impregnates it with life from God. It rejoices in the truth, cleaves unto the Lord, and rests in His bosom! The spirit does not concern itself with implications of the truth, it merely revels in it as a hungry child ravishes its stomach with warm milk, not asking nor reasoning concerning the properties of milk. A spiritual environment, where truth is expounded and proclaimed in the Word of God will make for a strong **dominant** spirit. It might be well to say at this point that the spirit of which we speak is that part of man which has been regenerated or born again. It is that segment of our being with which the Holy Spirit bears witness (I John 5:6). When the Word of God is brought unto it, the "renewed spirit" grasps it tenaciously, for it is the only commodity that it can grasp - the message of Truth as it is in Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:20). If a man has **not** been born again (Jno. 3:3-5), the Word of God will not appeal to him in truth; it shall be foolishness to him, for it speaks of another world, of another order of things foreign to the course of this world. On the other hand, the soul of man will not receive the Word in truth, nor will the body. Were it not for the spirit of the saint, the Word would be either ignored altogether or put aside in total wresting and perversion. The Word will not minister to the programs of men, nor to the building of institutions, but to the building up and nurturing of the spirit in man that has been begotten with the word of truth (James 1:18). Man's soul sees in the word something to rationalize, something to use for the facilitating of his own purposes - but let that Word continue to come in torrents of power and the soul will run and hide - it cannot bear it, for the Word of God does not fit into a rational mold; it is not conformed to the course and pattern of this world! Thus, in this way, the Word of God divides asunder between soul and spirit. Wherever the Word of God is preached in truth, the soul-life and the spirit-life of its listeners will be made manifest, and the manifestation is unmistakable!

All of this is certainly not intended to convey the thought that rationality has no place in the life of the saint - God forbid. There are reasonings which we partake in that are quite legitimate and necessary. However, they spring from a principle that is different than that of the earth. **As the truth is filtered into the spirit of man there comes a certain change in our rationality - we think different, see different, reason different.** Rationality is somewhat like chemistry (if I may here speak as a man) - it is a matter of putting together certain basic components in order to the creation of true effectuality or potency. **The world cannot truly rationalize, for it does not have true materials of thought with which to rationalize.** It is like a chemist trying to create a real thing from synthetic components - it just cannot work. But when the spirit of man lays hold of the truth of God (and there is no other genuine truth) it feeds to the intellect facts that enable the sanctified mind to make proper evaluations and analyses. **A truly reasonable religion can only be based upon true facts.** True facts, on the other hand, can

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PICKLED PIETY

Carnality often wears the garb of religiosity - false piety which brings a pain to the hearts of those that have experienced the grace of God in truth. I have called such piety "pickled piety" because it lacks life, and is stored in the vinegar of tradition, being sour and contrary to the sweetness of honey out of the rock. The foolishness of such piety appears evident to those that live in the bosom of the Lord, but often it is obscured to others. I have found that there is room for holy sarcasm in the Kingdom of God - not for means of carnal or fleshly derision, but to highlight the utter lack of truth in mere system. The Apostle admonishes us to note them that profess that they know God, but in works deny Him; those that profess godliness but deny the power thereof (Tit. 1:16; II Tim. 3:5). The following is a not too imaginative dialogue of a typical churchman. While it is not the rehearsal of an actual encounter, it reflects my own experience with many people who have lauded the church but denied the Lord. Perhaps some part of it will recall to your minds people that are worth praying for, and systems that are worth praying against.

"I didn't used to go to church at all until Pastor Blow led me to Christ. How happy I've been since then. The Bible - that's the book! Although I've never really read it through. Moses and the prophets? The Psalms? Let's see - they come before Matthew, don't they (it's been a long time since I memorized my books of the Bible). Well, we're strictly a New Testament church (non-denominational, of course), and stick to the writings of the Apostles. It's just like Paul said - 'My words shall never pass away.' I don't know a lot about the Bible, but I try to read it at least once a week, if for nothing else, to get the text of the Sunday School lesson in my mind. I even memorize the golden text if it is not too long - my memory is not what it used to be, of course. Why I remember 40 years ago when I knew the batting average of every major league baseball player. But to show how my memory has slipped, there are at least three that I can't recall right now.

Yes sir - the Lord is really good to me. I have a fine wife, don't owe any bills, and haven't had any major car trouble for about six months - what more can a fellow ask for? Some day the Lord will actually rule the world. Brother, that will be a day when living in this old world will be worthwhile! Right now, of course, the Devil is the ruler of the world. I know because the pastor told us last Sunday. If the Lord could only do something about the terrible things that are going on. Things have just gotten entirely out of hand!

Sin? I'm against it all of the way! Smoking, dancing, drinking - even card playing - I'm against it all. I admit that I may tell a little dirty story once in a while, and swear a tinsy bit when I hit my thumb - but we're not all perfect, you know. Anyway, the pastor said we are saved by grace, so what difference does it really make what I do. I admit that I don't pray often, nor do I read the Bible often; I rarely praise the Lord - as a matter of fact, I'm not quite sure what it really means to praise the Lord. Oh well, that is for those that have more time for these things. I really hate working, paying taxes, and the rotten way I am left

out of things on the job; seems that I can't get any place in this world. Not much money saved and the house is falling apart. Oh well, I don't want to bother you about these things. It is enough that I'm against sin anyway - that's the main thing.

Some of these things that you folk speak about - like justification, sanctification, redemption and glorification are too deep for me. I personally think we ought to major on salvation. Everyone can understand about that. I figure if a fellow, knows everything about that he does not need to know about these other things. Anyway, I never did go to college in the first place.

Meditate? Oh yes, I do a lot of thinking - why, I'm a thinking man. You know, I was just thinking the other day about the corruption in politics. Brother, we could sure use a new president; and those taxes - brother, there's a real crying shame! But still, I've got my health, and that is the main thing! Not much, I admit, but we do have to be thankful; praise the Lord.

Children? Yea, I've got a couple. Never realized that they could be such a problem and responsibility. Too, we have not been able to do much since they've come along; been restricted pretty much to the home. But, we're still thankful for them. As long as they are in good health, that's the main thing, anyway. Even though they have restricted us a lot, however, we try not to restrict them - after all, they do have a mind of their own. We don't force religion on them either. When they get old enough, we hope they will make the right choice. We feel if we don't teach them dogmatically or force anything on them they will have an open mind about these things. Sure would hate to inhibit their personality. You know - psychology has really taught us a lot about children. Say I noticed that your children all make good grades in school; sure wish my kids did. You know, I think if we didn't just make them go to school they would be drop-outs. Those children - they won't do a thing unless you make them; know what I mean?

Pray? Always! I ask God to help me everyday, even when I'm not sick. But, you know, the Lord helps them that helps themselves - like the Bible says. I think it is more important to do my best than to pray. God understands anyway. Church? Brother, amen to that! We go every week - it makes us feel real good. Since we've been saved we have really seen the importance of Sunday School and church. I don't like those long-winded sermons, though. My attention-span isn't too long. After about 20 or 30 minutes my mind begins to wander and I can't concentrate. But I really love the truth - especially the Bible! It really gets me the way some preachers preach their own ideas, though. Man's ideas aren't important in the first place the way I see it. My idea of preaching is that it should be interesting, and reach the lost. It should also have at least one good point, and the preacher should use illustrations so the people can understand. I say put it so a six year old child can understand; then everyone can get it. The erroneous conception of the necessity of profundity in scholasticism and dexterity in articulation is obnoxious to me. It ought to be simple; plain and simple—and short. I think

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SALTY SENTENCES

by Brother John Davis

Being a true yokefellow in Christ Jesus, brother John Davis has brought joy to myself with his communication of the truth of God to my heart. He instructs the brethren meeting at 26th and Colfax every Tuesday evening, and the Lord has abundantly blessed him. Currently he is directing the attention of the brethren to some precious truths in the book of Jude. Because his remarks have been so powerful and effectual in our lives, I thought it good to pass them on to our readers in part. Below are some sentences extracted from some recent instruction he gave us on the fourth verse of that good book of Jude. We commend both brother Davis and his words to your hearts.

"Before we instruct too much, we should be apprised of the truth **ourselves**."

"Grace is the **last** and **final** outreach of God for man. Therefore, to despise the Spirit of Grace is to sin away the day of Grace."

"God's grace is for the comfort of the **saint**, and not for a cloak to the sinner."

"Doctrine cannot **necessarily** be dissassociated from those that bear it."

"To be in the truth, you will always hold it **higher** than yourself."

"We use the means of Grace to arrive at the **certainty** of salvation."

"There can be no assurance for the ones that do not believe the report **given**."

"Satan cannot figure out God's thoughts. He is hedged on **every** side. **Whatever** he does works out for the ultimate good of God's children."

"The **faithful** are diligent in purging themselves of the blights of false doctrine that have been brought in."

"False doctrines come in to cast doubts; they cause trouble among believers."

"God has not done **anything** rashly, but has proceeded according to forethought, foresight, and foreknowledge."

"By truth we **live**, and by error we **die**."

"There is no such thing as an afterthought with God."

"God leaves enough difficulty in the Word so that believers will **not** become presumptuous."

"The Word of Truth" Ministry Continues To Expand

The expansion of the ministry of THE WORD OF TRUTH rejoices our hearts, for it sets forth before our minds the glorious working of our Father. Just since the last edition of the Word two effectual doors have been opened of the Lord, and grace abundantly granted to enter therein. In answer to an urgent request by Brother Jonothan Kwon of Seoul, Korea, 20,000 copies of the pamphlet "Seeking The Lord" (available in The U.S. also) have been translated into Korean and printed for distribution. Also, a second printing of the pamphlet, "The True and Living God" in the Indian language is being published for India under the direction of Brother P. Abraham Samuel - 80,000 copies (this will make a total distribution in India of 100,000 copies of this tract).

When these requests arrived (unsolicited) we were notified that the cost incurred would be about

\$1,000.00. This amount far transcends our normal operating expenditures and available funds. The letters were literally laid out before the Lord in one of our public assemblies, and diligent prayer was made by nine of the local brethren. Within an eight day period the Lord had so touched the hearts of the brethren here that the need was supplied to the glory of God. At this time both of the requests are being filled, and we praise God for it. We ask that our readers join with us in glorifying the Lord for the magnification of His Word.

The brethren in Korea and India with whom we have been in contact (by the providence of the Lord) are currently pleading for more literature. The rate of literacy is increasing in both of these countries, and there appears to be a good degree of receptivity to the Gospel of the grace of God. Both countries have requested monthly publications of THE WORD OF TRUTH in their own language. The costs of such publications (10,000 copies in each country) is very nominal in comparison to printing costs in this country (between \$300.00 and \$400.00 for both publications - 10,000 copies in India, and 10,000 copies in Korea), yet they exceed our present resources. We are setting these ministries before you for thoughtful and spiritual deliberation, trusting that the Lord will give you an active interest in the feeding of these distant souls.

THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE CONCERNING SOCIAL DEPRAVITY

Social upheavals and evidential; they are signs of spiritual darkness. When man walks in estrangement from God all does not always go well; yea, "when thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" (Gen. 4:7). Thus it is with the situations that currently dominate the social structure of our land. Rather than being more evidences of social injustices, they manifest a spiritual depravity and aloofness from God that is alarming to the illuminated heart. Mere men may deal with the symptomatic conditions, but let he that is spiritual strike at the heart of the issue by praying and preaching repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). See to it that none be deceived by this social subterfuge that is closing the eyes of myriads to eternal matters. For purposes of heart stimulation, I should like to suggest several causes for the social upheavals and disorders of our day. All of them call for prayer and supplication to the Father of lights with Whom we have to do.

- (1. This evidences a society that has walked contrary to God and has refused to retain Him in their knowledge (Rom. 1:28ff). God is visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children unto the third and fourth generation (Ex. 34:7).
- (2. Our present conditions are a time of reaping; men have sown to the flesh, and are of the flesh reaping corruption (Gal. 6:7-8). They have sown to the wind, and have reaped the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7). Those that cast their bread upon the waters shall find it returning to them after many days (Eccl. 11:1). Dis-

BLIND SIGHT

My God, Thy providence unfolds itself
mysteriously, not plain to me
Untimely betimes seem Thy Sovereign moves
Thy grace and love not plain to me.
Impervious - not I, to blind stupidity,
confess I now my ignorance.
Thy footsteps in the waving sea obscured
not even seen by quickening glance.

Behold what vanity doth rage in me
that inabilities make weak.
Ought not I rest more solely in Thy Grace
learn strength while waiting still and meek.
If darkness shrouds Thy providence from me,
presumptuous doth strut and show,
Supposing secret things may be plumbed out
that wormy probing makes me know.

My lot, O Lord in pleasant places cast
doth seem unpleasant to my mind;
Yet only near horizons cause such thoughts—
my flesh doth 'round my mind entwine.
The truth, my Father, seems beyond my grasp
so far removed from comforts sight.
The present case seems larger than my faith
the circumstance as dark as night.

Behold this worm, despicable and low,
in self-strength not one inch to rise.
Thy healthful countenance upon me shine
By Sovereign Grace open my eyes
Let me not languish in a world too plain,
but show Thy servant truthful things.
I wait, my Lord, for Thee to strengthen me
that I might rise on eagle's wings.

There are times when the child of God is alone, like an owl and a pelican (Psa. 102:6). It is during such times that the soul is sifted and perfected, and he is brought to realize afresh the blessing of faith that is tried. How precious does that faith become then - when obscurity envelops the things of truth, and the luster of the bright diamonds of reality is smeared by our finite understanding and minds. This whole experience is of the Lord; used by Him in the development of our faith (I Pet. 5:9-10). Let no saint despair during these times, but rather stay upon his God (Isa. 50:10) and "lean not to his own understanding" (Prov. 3:5-6). Days of darkness will yet come over us while we tabernacle in the flesh, and that because this sort of discipline is necessary to our perfection for glory. Nothing can make these times pleasant for the moment, for they are truly grievous (Heb. 12:11), but their presence denotes our sonship, and therein may we rejoice. Realizing that the vast body of churchdom today knows nothing of these times, we herald the message to all of God's people, knowing full well that they have already experienced such times, and will yet taste more of them. Yet, it is comforting to the spirit to know that these things have a Divine origin and that they shall eventuate in our perfection. Be patient, therefore, beloved brethren, in your trials of faith, for you shall yet come forth as pure gold.

honesty, graft, and all other immoral and unlawful attitudes of men before God shall return unto their bosom manyfold - thus are we witnessing these things.

- (3. The current turmoil is evidence of activity in the regions of the "air" where the Satanic hierarchy reigns. We are taught in Scripture that flesh and blood are not the true opponents of the saints but "powers, principalities, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). The angel Gabriel wrestled with one of these evil princes for 21 days, detained by that mighty evil power that ruled over the nation of Persia, giving it the political dominancy in the world (Dan. 10:12-20). Men are being agitated by Satan, stirred up by him for the execution of evil.
- (4. Conditions also evidence the higher truth of God's maneuverings. Before the Lord executes judgement upon a people, He always draws them into a sphere of unlawful activities. If this is difficult for some to receive, let them remember the words of II Sam. 24:1; "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah." Or who could forget the Judge of Israel, Samson, who played with an harlot - a matter against the law - insisting that he be permitted the right to marry her. When the matter was over, it is recorded in Scripture of his parents; "But his father and mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that He sought an occasion against the Philistines . . ." (Judges 14:1-4). Let the people of God prepare themselves by prayer, therefore, lest they enter into temptation.

I have presented four levels of truth here; four different views of the social depravity. Some are able to see all four views of adversity, and others are not; but any view is sufficient to summon the prayers of the saints Godward. The most evident cause for upheaval among men is the iniquity of that generation. A view not as evident is that of retribution; of God visiting iniquity back upon the sons of men. A still higher view sees agitation among men as coming by the stimulus of high spiritual evil powers. A still higher and more glorifying view sees adversity among earthlings as God filling up the cup of wrath and indignation in order to His own glory. Actually, the whole matter starts with God (Rom. 11:36), Satan and his hosts became the executors of it, it is not done without a cause, and men are caught up in things that provoke the Lord God of hosts. For those that are of full age we present these things for their consideration. For the younger we admonish to deliberation on these things in order to the formation of a more manly spiritual condition.

Commentary on Philippians

(From page 2)

preaching Christ "of good will," "of love," "in truth," and knowing that Paul was set by God for the defence of the gospel (Gal. 1:15, 16; Acts 13:2; II Tim. 1:11). These spoke with a view to glorify God, edify saints, and save sinners. May God send us more such men!

PICKLED PIETY

(From page 5)

a fellow should listen when the Bible is being preached too; but you can't expect him to listen for more than a half-hour at the most. Incidentally, speaking of listening, you know I can't get out of my mind the filth and smut that is on television these days. Why, just the other day I sat for four solid hours before the T.V. and saw nothing but sex and violence; got so engrossed that I forgot to eat supper. I figure we Christians ought to do something about the public media before it contaminates the kids.

Say! How about our church? Is it very big? You do preach the full gospel, don't you? Oh well, when the Lord comes there won't be any more small churches - I guess you're really looking forward to that day. The Lord will rapture the church right out of this old world, and everyone will be wondering where we've gone. I'm sure glad we don't have to be around for the great tribulation - brother, that is really going to be something, isn't it.

Well, I hope the Lord will bless your church so it can be big like ours - maybe someday it will be like ours; won't that be a day? Well, goodbye and good luck, I've got to go and take the kids to the sock-hop at school - better than having them in the streets you know.

The Soul and the Spirit

(From page 4.)

only be conveyed by God. **Those whose spirits have not had impressed upon them the truth of God, therefore, are technically insane and unreasonable, for their entire process of thought is based upon that which is transitory and fleeting; that which either is temporal or altogether figmentary.** Before a man may reason properly, therefore, he must first become a student, a disciple of our Lord Jesus, sitting at His feet and "learning of Him" (Matt. 11:28, 29; Eph. 4:20ff). The spirit must first assimilate the truth, gain the dominancy over the soul and body (which dominancy can only be gained through an assimilation of the Truth), and then the thought processes will be properly ordered in the sphere into which Truth has been introduced by the Spirit of God.

All of this may seem highly irrelevant to many, but let not this truth escape your mind, for it is based upon the foundation of the reality. **We are totally unreasonable in any matter in which we**

have not been instructed by the Word of God through the effectual instrumentality of the Spirit of God. Unless our spirits have realized the proclamation of God on any given matter, our intellect and rational processes will be unable to arrive at reality - any reality! The primary and fundamental work, then, becomes the nurturing of our spirits. "AS newborn babes DESIRE the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2). By using the word "as" the Spirit conveys to us the MANNER in which we are to desire the word of God - "As newborn babes." We are to crave it, thirst for it as for life-giving sustenance. He does not say "as newborn babes think upon the Word" - but "DESIRE the Word." This is language which only the spirit of man can fulfill. Now, let it be understood that our spirits as they have been regenerated by the Spirit of God DO desire the Word of God; this is how they live, "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). This exhortation is designed to awaken us to the sensitiveness of our spirits, and to summon us to an attentiveness to our spirits rather than our souls. How may this be accomplished; "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit . . ." (Heb. 4:12). As we are brought into contact with the Word, there will arise certain aspirations, certain inclinations and desires in the spirit. We will desire forgiveness of sins, fellowship with God, insight into the heavens, etc. We are to pay attention to these desires - this is our spirit yearning after its Savior. These things do not have to sift through your understanding to be appreciated by your spirit - it joyfully responds to them. That part of you that is relishing the truth, and that yearns after the Lord - that is your spirit, and the Word of God has shown it to you! **Your understanding can only be fruitful as your spirit is filled and satisfied - learn that truth and you shall have made a significant advance in the Kingdom.** I am not speaking of something mystical or magical, but of an actual transpiration within man.

Those who shun the Word of God do violence to their spirits and usher into their lives an era of false and fallacious reasoning. Those who cry that the word is "too deep", and that they cannot understand it are giving expression to their soul-life; that is the way it speaks. It cleaves to the earth, as the Psalmist well said (Psa. 119:25). But the spirit of man is not basically rational - it does not need reasons, it simply rejoices in the truth for it feeds and nourishes it. You must learn, oh follower of the Lamb, to be more heavenly and less earthly. Your mind can then be used to the glory of God when you yourself are transported into the sphere of truth.

Let none be discouraged with their personal apprehension of the truth if so be that they are diligently subjecting their spirits to it. In due time you shall be able to better form thoughts of the Kingdom, see reasons, and understand mysteries. The important thing is to now fill your heart with God's proclamations - drink them in, absorb them freely! Let the Word do its work of dividing; let it sever you from the course of the world and fit you for heaven. That is the work assigned to it, and it does it well. Fulfill that scripture, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16).